

The Sun

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| SUNDAY, Per Year | \$7.20 |
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any actual and material loss to Austria in the event of the formal withdrawal of America's friendship.

Governor Whitman's Tax.

It was conclusively shown last winter that not only was the Whitman State tax of \$10,000,000 unnecessary but that ordinary prudence and foresight would avoid any direct State tax. These contentions, lucidly set forth then, are confirmed now in Comptroller Travis's estimates of revenues and expenditures for next year which were made public this week.

The Republicans at Albany did not intend to levy a heavy direct State tax for next year. A State and a national election will be held next fall, and the Republicans want to win them. The Whitman tax discredited the Democratic administration; the reduction or expunging of the Whitman tax is depended on to bolster up Republican credit generally and the Whitman tax specifically.

Last week Governor WHITMAN was widely quoted as predicting that for next year the State tax would not be more than a third of the impost for this year. Governor WHITMAN did not deny this until after Comptroller Travis had gone to \$8,000,000 better by announcing that no State tax would be needed for 1917. Immediately after Mr. Travis's pronouncement was issued Governor WHITMAN disowned it in the familiar phraseology of a virtuous politician who desires to straighten an unfortunate kink in his record the prophecy attributed to him.

The Governor's latest bulletin on his financial upsurging will be read with these facts in mind: the Whitman ambition for the Republican nomination for President, but if that is unattainable, he naturally wants to run for Governor again; Comptroller Travis is a candidate for the nomination for Governor; Mr. Travis must not be allowed to get any advantage out of his computations of income and outgo.

Mr. Travis suffers under one serious handicap in a controversy over finances with Mr. WHITMAN. The State Comptroller must at least pretend that he knows what he is talking about.

Wilson-Galt.

Mr. Wilson and his bride—on whom, that no favorable omen shall be lacking in the nuptial celebration at Washington today, THE SUN specifically shines this morning, regardless of the meteorological conditions prevailing on the banks of the Potomac—have comported themselves admirably since the announcement of their engagement under somewhat difficult circumstances.

The unavoidable publicity, the intrusions of fools, the advice of the malicious; a thousand incidental irritants from which men and women less conspicuously placed are free, they have endured with equanimity and good nature. Their unaffected attitude in public has pleased their 100,000,000 neighbors; and if some of these have been too impulsive in the exhibition of their interest, the demeanor of its objects has given proof that the friendly motives which inspired it were not misinterpreted.

We congratulate Mr. WILSON and Mrs. GALT; we wish for their long happiness and prosperity; and we extend to them the compliments of the season, secure in the knowledge that we speak the thought of all our fellow citizens.

Secretary Lane on the National Parks.

In the display of the resources of the country in his annual report Secretary LANE of the Interior does not forget the national parks. It is worth any man's while to turn to that part of the report in which he passes them in review and urges the building of roads and other improvements to make them more accessible and delightful. The Hon. FRANKLIN K. LANE is a lover of natural scenery, and fortunately for those into whose hands the account of his stewardship falls, he knows how to write about the things that interest him. Of the new Yosemite reached by the Tioga road, which, thanks to Mr. STEPHEN T. MATHER and others, the Government has acquired, he says:

"This is a Yosemite far different from the quiet, incomparable valley. It is a land of forests, snows and glaciers. From Mount Lema one looks, as from an island, upon a tumbled sea of snowy peaks. Its lakes, many of which have never been fished, are alive with trout. And through it foams the Tuolumne River, which in a mile drops a mile, a water spectacle destined to world celebrity. Meeting obstructions in its slanting rush, the water now and again rises almost perpendicularly, forming upright foaming arcs sometimes fifty feet in height."

It is difficult for one who has not seen America first to decide which he would prefer to visit, if his time be limited, Yosemite or the Yellowstone Park. If JOHN MUIR is a favorite author it will be Yosemite of the Sierras; but if the traveler is a naturalist his choice will be Yellowstone, of which Mr. LANE says:

"Its great size, its altitude, its vast wilderness, its plentiful waters, its favorable conformation of rugged mountain and sheltered valley and the nearly perfect protection afforded by the policy and the scientific care of the Government have made this park, since its inauguration in 1872, the natural and inevitable center of game conservation for this nation."

Already the elk, says the Secretary, are too abundant, and speci-

mens will be distributed to State preserves. The antelope census shows rapid breeding. A Yellowstone bear, as visitors know, is one of the most ubiquitous and sociable of animals. In fact a pensioner of the hotels. But other reservations call the nature lover. There is the Rocky Mountain National Park, recently opened. It is on the Continental Divide seventy miles from Denver, has an area of 350 square miles, contains 200 lakes, and bears and bighorn as permanent residents. Then there is Glacier Park in Montana, crowded with unnamed peaks looking into natural mirrors at their feet. Every American should see Sequoia Park in California. Secretary LANE recommends that the home of the great redwoods be extended to take in the Kern River Canyon, or the lumber kings will spoil that wonderful gorge. He proposes also that the great highway completed by the State of Oregon along the Columbia River be connected with Mount Hood.

It is estimated that more than \$100,000,000 usually spent in European travel has been turned into the coffers of the railroad companies, the hotels and kindred interests by Americans who this year took in the San Francisco exposition and saw their own country with wonder and delight. The audience that Secretary LANE addresses is therefore increased by thousands of enthusiastic citizens, and he will have their approval for those national park improvements which he recommends.

The size of the Italian army landed in Albania is not stated, but the reports indicate that it is sufficient for either offensive or defensive operations. While it may ultimately operate with the Allies in an advance into the Balkans it is probable that its present purpose is to oppose the invasion of Albania threatened by the German-Bulgarian forces.

An invasion of Albania would be almost as serious a blow to Italy as an invasion of her own territory; for here she has for years opposed Austria and centered her plans of expansion. There is no doubt that after the war there will be an adjustment of interests in Albania. The failure of the Government of the Prince of Wiro has shown the difficulty of establishing a rule for the people, and a partition of the territory is not unlikely.

In the mountainous interior, it is said, are some valuable, unexplored mineral deposits. The only land capable of agricultural development is in the valleys and along the sea. A few of the towns, Elbasan, Tirana and Koritza, have possibilities as market centres. But the possession of the coast is the chief ambition of the contending nations. Valona, on the south, is one of the greatest natural harbors of southern Europe. Durazzo was a great port in Roman times and the western terminus of the Via Egnatia. Medua is a well sheltered anchorage, and Scutari, in the north, could be easily connected with the sea by dredging the Boyan. All of these ports, with the exception of Scutari, have been held since the beginning of the war by Italy.

For the Teutonic allies to add Albania to Serbia and their other holdings in the Balkans would give them strong political pawns in the diplomatic game. The Kaiser could throw to his brother-in-law CONSTANTINE a much coveted prize in southern Albania, the Epirus. With this in their possession the Greeks would control both shores of the island of Corfu and be in a position to neutralize the value of the harbors of Valona and Durazzo to the Italians.

Self-interest may, thus, be forcing Italy into the Balkans. Nevertheless, her appearance in Albania becomes important; she definitely announces that she is to do something for the general cause and not merely to confine herself to the recovery of her lost provinces.

It is credibly reported that in the present juncture of affairs no confidential message committed to the custody of official Washington is exempt from exposure to those from whom it is most important to keep its contents secret.

For years it has been notorious that the alleged privacy of certain departments was purely formal and literary, bearing no relation whatever to the practical performance of their duties. There have, however, been some Americans so innocent as to believe that in a situation of grave implication the leaks would be plugged and the precautions essential to orderly progress in vital undertakings enforced.

These unsophisticated citizens appear to be in error. The dictates of prudence have not been heeded. In a passion for preparedness a fundamental element of efficiency has been utterly disregarded. Can this contempt for ordinary caution be attributable to the fact that in this particular complete immunity from a serious menace might be obtained by the exercise of common sense without the expenditure of a single dollar of the taxpayers' money?

President Wilson's appointment of HENRY PRATHER FLETCHER as Ambassador to Mexico will please every one who wants to see the diplomatic service taken out of politics and filled with competent men promoted for merit. It is satisfactory also because a robust American of experience and character is needed in the Mexican

capital. Mr. FLETCHER, who is now Ambassador to Chile, at the age of 42, answers the description. A Rough Rider and Philippine volunteer, he entered the diplomatic service through the door of competitive examination, and without political influence of any kind reached his present post by hard work and sheer ability. As secretary of legation at Peking the time came when he had to exercise the functions of Ambassador, and he distinguished himself in a trying period.

Mr. Wilson is the third President who has recognized the capacity of HENRY PRATHER FLETCHER and rewarded him. Evidently the President was seeking the right man for the Mexican mission, or he would not have decided upon his own Ambassador to Chile. It is clearly a case of promotion for work well done in another Spanish American republic.

By this time Mr. FLETCHER must understand the Latin temperament and the Spanish American politician. In dealing with the problems that will confront him the moment he sets foot in the city of Mexico he will begin with a clean slate and without a handicap of any kind, for he is a non-partisan diplomat and under obligations to no one. Mr. Wilson has made an appointment that seems exceptionally good.

The Combatant War Writer.

Moral courage is an attribute justly held in high esteem. Mr. JAMES BARNES of Princeton and Africa deserves to be decorated for telling the war stories, at the dinner of the Society of Illustrators, that there is "no such animal" nowadays as the war correspondent. Not if the General Staffs know it. Visitors to the front are personally conducted in lulls in the fighting; they are allowed to see only what it is proper for them to see, and of this the local commander is the judge. Even this experience is sometimes attended with danger, for the range of a field gun is long and shells are no respecters of persons. But the intention is to send these visitors back with whole skins as well as to make sure that they can do no harm afterward with their pens.

There is no such thing to-day, at any rate in the great war, as following a campaign in the field and writing about it from day to day for publication. Much of interest may be written about the war from the skirts of it, but the war correspondent, as he used to be known, is about as extinct as the dodo or the great auk.

Nevertheless, a literature of personal experience will flower richly after the struggle. It will be the work of men of imagination and sentiment who fought in the trenches and underwent the nerve wracking, soul shaking ordeal of battle. Privates as well as officers will contribute, for there are those in the thick of it who can use the pen with the ease and realism of any of the famous correspondents, RUSSELL, McGAHAN or ARCHIBALD FORBES. Already this literature is in the bud. From time to time something with a moving appeal comes out of the black cloud behind which guns are booming, and men are dying for love of country.

Austria seems to be too proud to be reasonable.

The London police have raided the office of a newspaper. It was not out of order to search the Street Cleaning Commissioner, or denounce the operators of the railroads, or pretend that he could have done better than any of them had done. He endeavored to keep his temper, refused to sign upon the cover of the Street Cleaning Commissioner, and went about his business with as much good nature as he could muster.

Thereupon the populace fell upon him and made short work of him, because it was plain that he was abusing his position as a public official, and to the public welfare and otherwise undesirable.

This happened many years ago.

There has never been another New Yorker stout enough to try to imitate this foolhardy man.

It is to be hoped that the melody of the marriage bells will not be destroyed by the clangor of the alarm bells.

The retirement of General FERNET is worth as much as a hundred thousand fresh troops to the Allies.

The doctors are worrying over the high cost of bromides. They realize that at this crisis everybody ought to keep quiet.

Italy has begun to buy war material in this country for 1917. Haven't the Italians any regard for HENRY FORD's feelings?

We congratulate the suffragists of this country upon their choice of Mrs. CARLIE CHAPMAN CATT as national leader. There are few men in the nation who measure up to her stateswomanlike stature.

The State Department seems to be thoroughly prepared with both troops and reproofs.

KANSAS NEEDS NO LABOR.

Has All the Workers It Wants, Its Officials Declare.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN:—You printed a news despatch on December 6, recording the alleged shortage in farm labor in Kansas. The subjoined letter from the State's Free Employment Clerk corrects the erroneous impression this statement may have created.

IRVINGTON, N. J., December 16.

DEAR SIR: In reply to your inquiry relative to general farm work in Kansas, I have to say that there are more men than we know what to do with.

The article in the papers is misleading and did not come from this office.

TOPEKA, Kan., December 10.

Nevermore.

Laden with Peace a steamer sailed.

And all was love on board.

A white flag to the masthead nailed.

Above grim waters sailed.

White doves rose on the decks and poop.

Peace poems were read at night.

The sweetest talking looped the loop.

The word most damned was "night."

But human nature's most the same.

Have quite an strong as love:

Are men who fight so much to blame?

Just watch a dove kill dove!

The doves upon that steamer fought.

The pilgrims raged and swore:

A peace plan has come to naught.

As Poe sings: "Nevermore!"

—H. J. M.

HE LIVED LONG AGO.

Authentic Biographical Notes on a Footloose New Yorker.

Once upon a time there lived a man in New York who foolishly took upon himself the responsibility of caring for himself.

If it was necessary for him to go up town when everybody else wanted to go up town, he made the best of an annoying congestion of migratory bipeds, sought to stand on his own feet, and, in the process, he was the transportation company, and restrained his impulse to crowd and shove his fellow sufferers.

On the occasions when his desires led him to the theatre he arrived before the curtain rose. If the Demon Ruler called for a greenback, he kept his seat until the curtain fell, and was punctiliously returning before it went up again. His seat being in the middle of a row, he did not charge to the aisle before his neighbors had a chance to arrange unobstructed passage for him. By this conduct he avoided treading on several thousand toes, and in all his life he never knocked a woman's hat to the floor.

At street crossings, whether he was driving his high powered, richly upholstered motor car, or pushing a shank's mare, he waited patiently for the traffic policeman to direct his movements, and thus missed the great privilege of frequently getting in other people's way. And this he did in perfect good temper, never showing his impatience or his dislike of being told what to do.

The power of compelling him to observe the rules, or boasting about his acquaintance with the Mayor, the Commissioner of Police, the Head Dog Catcher, or other powerful and influential friends, he never allowed to happen to enjoy.

In shops he did not attempt to display his superiority to salesmen by bullying them, or to pretty saleswomen by making eyes at them; and when he saw an article he liked he said so, without picking the time, or saying that it was not as good as one he bought eighteen years ago when shopkeepers were poorer.

Should his pleasure or his business take him to establishments whose prices were high, he never allowed his pocketbooks wide, he did his part without complaint, and he was never known to protest in a Fifth Avenue restaurant because the *buffet* was higher than in a Broadway saloon.

He did not pretend to know more about wines, or diamonds, or automobile engines than he really knew, and when he was in doubt he sought and followed the advice of men who were better informed than he was.

His practice in making known his dissatisfaction over his treatment in public and private places was to speak privately to the person in authority, without calling him a fool or a thief, and he found the adjustment of misunderstandings a simple matter.

Early in life he disabused his mind of the notion that vintage champagne should be sold for the price of domestic beer, and bearing this fact always in mind he was able to orient his appetite in the making known of his income in a manner that afforded him the utmost satisfaction.

In the days when table d'hôte dinners engaged his fancy he did not heap coals of fire on the heads of waiters, but he was never known to protest in a Fifth Avenue restaurant because the *buffet* was higher than in a Broadway saloon.

Five franc pieces of silver, admitted as cover of the French bank notes and it is well known that huge amounts of the same kind of money were being used in the United States. The cash in hand of the Bank of England consists not only in gold, but, as the reports say, in coin and bullion. The cash in hand of the Bank of France consists not only in gold, but, as the reports say, in coin and bullion. The cash in hand of the Bank of Russia consists not only in gold, but, as the reports say, in coin and bullion.

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